Amendment to the Specification:

1) On page 1, insert the sentence --This application claims benefit of Provisional Patent Application no. 60/261,586, filed January 12, 2001.-- in between "Latch for Sponge Mop" and "Field of the Invention".

Thus amended, page 1 should now read beginning as follows:

Patent Application of

Robert A. Cann

For

Latch for Sponge Mop

This application claims benefit of Provisional Patent Application no. 60/261,586, filed January 12, 2001.

Field of the Invention

This invention relates to fasteners and latches, and more particularly, to an improvement in a type of quick release latch used to secure detachable sponges to sponge mops.

Background of the Invention

Sponge mops are well known in prior art, as are methods for securing detachable sponges to them. It is common practice to glue or similarly bond a rectangular sponge to a backing plate structure, which in turn is detachably secured to a mop head at or near each end of a sponge. [Text continues as in original specification]

Amendment to the Specification (continued):

2) In the Summary of Invention section on page 3, amend the second paragraph as follows:

Each tab is centrally ~~locate~~ located on a beam, the beam extending a short distance beyond either end of the tab until it interconnects with the sponge backing plate. This short section of beam beyond each end of each tab twists or rotates more or less torsionally when the tabs are squeezed together. A central void separates the beams longitudinally and an outer void separates each beam longitudinally from the rest of the backing plate. Torsion stress in this beam member is more uniformly distributed than the bending stress concentrated at the inside corners of the L-shaped tab structures of the prior art Empire latch. Thus, the latch of my invention is less prone to breakage than the prior art Empire latch because the bending stress is more uniformly distributed over a larger area. The beam sections of the backing plate of my invention may be glued or bonded to the sponge, but the sponge is resilient and flexible enough that it has little or no effect on the torsion beams.

Amendment to the Specification (continued):

3) Amend the Reference Numerals Used in Drawings section on page 4 as follows:

Reference Numerals Used in Drawings

20 improved latch

22 sponge mop

24 tab

26 sponge

28 ~~void between tabs~~ central void

29 outer void

30 upper portion of tab

32 lower portion of tab

34 mop head aperture

36 ramp

38 central portion of tab

40 beam

42 backing plate

44 beam segment

46 tab end

Amendment to the Specification (continued):

4) Amend the Detailed Description of the Drawings section on page 4 as follows:

Detailed Description of the Drawings

Referring to **FIGS. 5** through **FIG. 8**, an improved latch **20** for a sponge mop **22** according to my invention is comprised of a pair of opposed tabs **24, 24** positioned more or less in line and centrally located at each end of a sponge **26**. The tabs **24, 24** are generally parallel to each other ~~with a void 28 in between~~. An upper portion **30** and lower portion **32** of each pair of tabs **24, 24** are spaced to fit closely within a corresponding mop head aperture **34**, while a ramp **36** in a central portion **38** of the tab **24** slopes or angles outward such that the dimension between the opposed tab ramps **36, 36** is larger than the opening in the mop head aperture **34**, thus creating an interference fit within the aperture **34.**

Each tab **24** is centrally ~~locate~~ located on a beam **40**, the beam **40** extending a short distance beyond either end of the tab **24** until it interconnects with a backing plate **42** ~~that is formed from a grid of intereonnecting beams~~. A short beam segment **44** beyond an end **46** of each tab **24** twists or rotates more or less torsionally when the tabs **24, 24** are squeezed together. A central void **28** separates the beams **40, 40** longitudinally and an outer void **29** separates each beam **40** longitudinally from the rest of the backing plate **42.**

To install the sponge **26** onto the mop **22** the upper tab end portions **30** of each latch **20** are pressed into the mop head apertures **34, 34** far enough that the ramps **36** deflect inward, pass through the aperture **34**, and spring back to their original position, thus holding the sponge **26** onto the mop **22**. To remove the sponge **26**, the user squeezes and pushes on the upper portion of the tabs **30** that protrude from each mop head aperture **34**.

The present invention has now been described in connection with a number of specific embodiments thereof. However, modifications that are contemplated as falling within the scope of the present invention should now be apparent to those skilled in the art.